Bonded child labour

486. SHRI HARVENDRA SINGH HANSPAL: Will the Mini ster of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's atten tion has been drawn to the news re port under the caption "10 m. children arc banded labourers" which appeared in the Naional Herald of the 26th january, 1990 regarding bonded child labour in the country;

(b) if so, what is Government's assessment about the number of child bonded workers;

(c) what steps arc bai ng taken to get them released and to pay them the amount payable to such liberated workers; and

(d) whether Government propose to take any firm steps against the employers engaged in keeping bonded labour?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND WELFARE (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The responsibility for identification, release and reha bilitation of Bonded Labour under the Bonded Labour System (Abolittion Act, 1976 is that of the State Governments concerned. As on 31-3-1989, the State Governments had reported identification of 2,42,618 Bonded Labourers. Under the Act, no distinction has boon made between 'child' and 'adult' bonded labourer

(d) The enforcement of the provisions of the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976 are reviewed from time to time by the Ministry of Labour and State Governments advi sed to take various steps in the matter of identification and rehabilitation. Recently, a letter wa? addressed to all the Chief Ministers to ensure proper enforcement of various labour Iaws in the unorganised sector, including the Bondcd labour System (Aboli tion) Act, 1976.

Availability of cheap power, machines and other agricultural inputs

487. SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to stats :

(a) what schemes, if any, have lately been laid down and what steps have been taken to ensure easy and cheap availability of power and ma chines and other modern agriculture inputs to small and marginal far mers; and

(b) what is the percentage of agricultural produce contributed at present by small and marginal far mers and how for it is proposed to be increased by the end of the 8th Five Year Plan Period ?

THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI DEVI LAL): (a) In order to ensure easy and cheap availability of power and machos and other modern agriculture inputs to small & marginal farmers, the following Central/Centrally Sponsored Scheme are in operation:

(1) Jaldhara.

(2) Establishment of Farmers' Agro-Service Centres for customs hiring and popularisation of improved implements and hand tools.

(3) Enrcouraging irrigation through the use of Sprinklers/Drip System, Hydi?ms, Water Turbines, mar and animal operated.

(4) Assistance to Small & Marginal Farmers for Increasing Agricultural Production.